12: Free Europe Committee U-4 (no date) 1954 EC1 Hungary EC1

382
433 considerably below capacity throughout the whole 1950-1952 period.

Imports, Exports, and Consumption

439
382 Before oil was discovered and exploited in Transdanubia, Hungary met her oil needs by imports.

[373] Widespread demand for oil began in Hungary with the introduction of kerosene lamps around 1862. Until 1900 Russia, the United States, and Romania were the main sources of oil imports. Imports of refined products, almost exclusively kerosene, reached 100,000 tons annually during the 1880's for the whole Austro-Hungarian Empire, of which Hungary accounted for about 25,000 to 30,000 tons.

When some small refineries began operating in Hungary a duty was placed on kerosene. From 1885 on, considerable quantities of "synthetic crude" (kerosene mixed with crude oil) were imported from Russia and later from Romania to avoid this duty.

Galicia, then part of the Dual Monarchy, replaced American and Russian sources when oil was discovered there at the turn of the century. Shipping costs were lower and the oil was not subject to the import duty. However, some oil continued to go from Romania to nearby Hungarian Transylvania.

Meanwhile different oil products came into demand. Pitch and asphalt were produced from the asphalt-based Russian and Romanian crude. Paraffin from the paraffin-based Galician crude replaced beeswax and stearin in candles and became an important commercial product finding markets as distant as China. After 1900 some lamps burned lighter oil, and gasoline became a cleaning agent and a chemical solvent. Lamp kerosene, however, had to be free of gasoline, since its boiling point was fixed by law to prevent fires. Until well into the twentieth century gasoline was disposed of in flaring-pits as an undesirable by-product of kerosene refining.